



Vermont Commons Civic Association Newsletter

vccahouston.org

June
2010

VCCA Perimeter Signs Completed

We are happy to distinguish our neighborhood as Vermont Commons by displaying the attractive signs David Hoyer, neighbor and VCCA Deed Restrictions Committee member, has diligently worked to create for us. The silhouette of a home framed by trees is rendered on the perimeter signs which, by the way, is our trademark for both the VCCA Newsletter and Website and will be posted at these five locations: Peden @ Driscoll; Vermont @ Driscoll; Vermont @ Huldy; Fairview @ Huldy; and Fairview @ Driscoll.

These sites were chosen by the Civic Association as being the entrances with the heaviest traffic flowing into our subdivision. The signs will let those passing along our streets know our residents are committed to maintaining a strong community and preventing crime through pride of homeownership and responsibility.

When asked how long the signs have been in the making, David Hoyer explained that roughly two years ago the plan was conceived by members under

the leadership of then VCCA President, Mark Preston, who took steps to get the ball rolling. Since that time other VCCA officers, like Lance Hack, Nancy Higgs, and VCCA's current president, Jeanette Hix have encouraged David to see the project completed. After spending plenty of time and patience pursuing the City Permits for each of the five signs, selecting the best logo image, and working with Budget Signs on Shepherd to produce them, David is looking forward to having the signs erected in their designated places.

Our neighbor, David Hoyer, is hopeful the signs will contribute to a stronger sense of community, noting that people who have a sense of community typically take better care of their homes and better care of their neighbors in that community. Also, he feels the signs can provide more recognition to the name *Vermont Commons* while making us more identifiable on city and real estate maps, thereby enhancing our property values. Not a bad combination, Neighbor! Thanks, David, for all your work on our VCCA signs.

VCCA Membership is open to all residents of our area for \$30 annual dues payable January 1st & prorated to \$15 after June 30th.

Mail to:

**Vermont Commons
Civic Association
P. O. Box 130891
Houston, TX 77219-0891**

Meetings are every 2nd Wednesday of the month. There will be no meetings or newsletters for July & August.



**Join us at 7 pm June 9th
Mockingbird Bistro
1985 Welch @ McDuffie.**

Meet friends & neighbors & stay for the social hour afterward.

Shannon Kimbrough will speak at 7:30 pm at our June meeting.

RECLAIM, REUSE, REDUCE IS OUR REQUEST

Shannon Kimbrough, five-year Co-Director of Historic Houston and a graduate of the University of Houston with a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Design, will speak to us at our next meeting regarding all the benefits and services Historic Houston brings to our city and our neighborhood.

Living in an urban neighborhood such as VCCA, we witness daily transformations as older structures are being torn down and replaced by more modern architecture to feed the population's growing appetite to live in inner city neighborhoods like ours. Historic Houston focuses mainly on residential properties in our inner city neighborhoods which have seen the most redevelopment, and in combination with other programs, Historic Houston has diverted millions of tons of building materials (cont. p. 3)

Vermont Commons Garden Tour Cancelled

Many residents were intrigued by the idea of showing off their gardening and design skills to the community. They had volunteered to spend their Saturday escorting interested residents through their garden, answering questions, and sharing gardening ideas. Unfortunately, the Garden Tour will not take place. Numerous volunteers were needed for the tour to be successful. Hopefully, next year, with the help of even more volunteers we will be able to put a Garden Tour together. Thank you to all those gardeners who had volunteered.

June Yard of the Month

Tom Oxford
1813 Driscoll

Our June Yard of the Month goes to Tom Oxford at 1813 Driscoll. The yard flows with beautiful flowering native shrubs and perennials. Spicebush and Sulfur butterflies dance over the flower heads of countless lilies, daisies, and cone-flowers in this curbside garden. One can't help but admire the lavender spires of the Texas Vitex tree rising above the fence near the drive.

Every plant here has its season; while one is fading, another is emerging, just like a true naturalized garden which sustains many creatures of nature. You must pass by and take a long look at everything going on in this unique space.

Hard to believe, but Tom moved into his bungalow 42 years ago, which might make most of us feel like interlopers on the scene. Although he has been retired for ten years, he moves through each day with marked enthusiasm, remarking that



between his two part-time jobs and gardening he is hard pressed to find enough free time to relax with friends over dinner or read the books on his current reading list.

Neighborhood Crime Report

In early May there were four separate car break-ins on McDuffie. Car windows were broken, a convertible soft top was cut open and a GPS was stolen from one car and a gym bag taken from another. The cost to repair the damages far outweighs the price of the items stolen. Do not leave any electronic device in view in your car; better yet, do not leave anything in your car. It seems thieves are willing to break into parked cars if they even suspect there's something valuable inside.

Volunteers Needed!

We need volunteers for the following special events and committees. To volunteer, call Jeanette Hix at (713) 521-3337.

- Neighborhood Picnic:** Committee Members
- Crime Prevention:** Committee Members
- Newsletter:** Folding & Print Shop Pick-up
- Yard of the Month:** Committee Members

PIP Meeting Report, Friday, April 30th

By Kelly McKinzie, Chair, Neighborhood Crime Committee

Presentation given by Patricia Harrington, Director of Mayor's Anti-Gang Office (City of Houston)

Contact info: patricia.harrington@cityofhouston.net, phone: (832) 393-0897

Website: <http://www.houstontx.gov/publicsafety/antigang/>

Key points from the presentation:

Gang Graffiti vs. Tagger Graffiti

Gang Graffiti Characteristics

- Little artistic effort
- Uses gang signs and symbols
- Legible but un-styled
- One solid color
- Found in easy to reach places (walls, fences, dumpsters)
- Crossed or X'ed out
- Gang member names are small
- Gang name is prominent

This type of activity may appear insignificant, but it is usually the first sign of a gang's presence in a neighborhood, and depending on the markings, may indicate future violence or criminal activity. Whether it is gang or tagger graffiti, it should be cleaned as soon as possible. Property owners are responsible for abatement on their property, but can contact the City of Houston Neighborhood Protection Corps for assistance.

Tagger Graffiti Characteristics

- Obvious artistic effort and design
- Graphic
- Difficult to read, balloon or bubble shaped
- Multi-colored
- Found in hard to reach places (billboards, freeway signs, bridges, building tops)
- Tags are on top of other
- Tagger name is prominent

To report graffiti vandalism on public and/or private property, contact the City of Houston's 311 Helpline. Your request for assistance will be routed to the Houston Police Department's Neighborhood Protection Corps' Graffiti Abatement Program.

To report graffiti vandalism in progress, contact the Houston Police Department at (713) 884-3131.

VCCA MEETINGS & EVENTS CALENDAR

- JUN** Speaker: **Shannon Kimbrough, Co-Director of HISTORIC HOUSTON** on Saving Our Older Homes; Social Hour
- JUL & AUG: No Meetings & No Newsletters**
- SEP** Speaker: **River Oaks Gym Owner Chad Evans** on Health & Fitness Training; Social Hour; Upcoming Neighborhood Picnic
- OCT** Speaker: **Data Doctor Tech Chris Sacco** on Internet Viruses; Social Hour; **National Night Out Oct 6th with Officer Wayne Pate**
- NOV** Speaker; Social Hour
- DEC** Holiday Party: **Holiday Lights & Decorations Winners Announced**; Social Hour

2010 Vermont Commons Civic Association Officers

President	Jeanette Hix	(713) 521-3337	hix@rmi.net
VP	Nancy Higgs	(512) 422-3317	nkmh54@aol.com
Secretary	Lance Hack		lhack02@hotmail.com
Treasurer	Andy Tallin		atallin01@yahoo.com
Newsletter	Karen Sturtevant		johnsturtevant@sbcbglobal.net
Newsletter	Jeanenne Hagerman		bhehome@aol.com

Just a Note From Jeanette

As summer fast approaches, it is great to see all of VCCA gardens so full of color. We all struggled after Hurricane Ike and then a hard freeze this past winter. But, we seem to have recovered. It is a treat to walk through the community and literally smell the roses. The VCCA volunteers are taking a break for July and August, but we will return with many exciting things for our residents this fall. See you in September if not sooner.



Stop! Don't Put That in the Trash!

Computers and related components contain hazardous materials that can leach into a community's water supply. Cathode ray tubes (CRTs), circuit boards, batteries, and mercury switches contain hazardous materials, such as lead, mercury, cadmium and chromium. Residential electronic scrap items accepted by the City of Houston are monitors, televisions, printers, keyboards, mice, scanners, fax machines, telephone handsets, VCRs, CPUs, cellular phones without batteries and other small consumer electronics. There is a (5) piece maximum amount of electronic scrap per vehicle.

We have two convenient locations to dispose of environmentally unsafe household items in our area. Now, through a grant from the Houston-Galveston Area Council of Governments and the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission, the City has established the **Environmental Service Center** for the disposals of hazardous waste, **11500 South Post Oak, (713) 551-7355**, open Tue – Wed, 9am-3pm & the 2nd Sat of each month 9am-1pm. Paint, pesticides, batteries, smoke alarms, computers, televisions, most anything you shouldn't throw into the landfill can be brought here.

With the same grant from the Houston-Galveston Area Council of Governments, the Recycling Division has begun a "BOPA" program at the **Consumer Recycling Center located at 5900 Westpark, (713) 551-7355, call for hours**

RECLAIM, REUSE, REDUCE (cont. from p. 1)

from the landfill. These reclaimed materials from homes slated for demolition provide an invaluable resource to homeowners, builders, architects, designers, and artists. Since 2003 Historic Houston has relocated 30 historic houses to prevent their demolition and provided an alternative solution for Houston's low to moderate income housing needs.

Historic Houston, founded in 1998, is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization serving our community by reclaiming Houston's historic architectural resources and history through scholarly research, education, and advocacy of sustainable development. Since 2001 Historic Houston has sponsored multiple classes on Houston's historic neighborhoods conducted through the Rice School of Continuing Studies. The office and salvage warehouse of Historic Houston is open to the public Wednesday through Saturday and is located at 1307 W. Clay Street, just two blocks from Waugh Drive. It houses the Catherine Cage Burns Resource Center, which provides information on local and regional architecture and Houston neighborhoods.

As residents of an inner city neighborhood, we can help reduce the amount of demolition building materials taken to the landfill by contacting Historic Houston as older properties go up for sale. Given enough warning time to approach the owner, the home could possibly be relocated and or building materials such as windows, doors, and flooring could be salvaged by members of Historic Houston. If you would like to get involved with projects like this, come to our next meeting to greet Shannon Kimbrough, Co-Director of Historic Houston. See you there!

BLOCK CAPTAIN ADDITION

In our haste, we left Debbie Costello, Block Captain on McDuffie from Welch to Westheimer, (713) 520-9904, off our Block Captain list in the May Newsletter.

of operation. The City of Houston now accepts "B"atteries, "O"il, "P"aint and "A"ntifreeze for recycling at the Center. The batteries accepted are car-type batteries (lead-acid); used oil up to 5 gallons and oil filters; latex paint only (sorry, no oil-based) up to ten 1-gallon cans and one 5-gallon can; and antifreeze up to 5 gallons. **The latex paint accepted at the Center is recycled and used in the City's ongoing graffiti abatement program.**

Additionally, the Center accepts up to 10 tires for disposal and electronic scrap items, too. While cleaning out the garage or under the sink, you wouldn't want to put any of these household hazardous waste items in the trash or down the sink, so load these items carefully into your car and take them to either of the locations listed previously. Glass food and drink bottles/jars are also recycled at Westpark, as well as at the 3602 Center Street Drop Off location near Heights Blvd, which is open 24/7. Good to know, since our curbside recycling service currently doesn't include glass of any kind.

Vermont Commons Civic Association
PO Box 130891
Houston, TX 77219-0891

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage
Paid
Houston, TX
Permit 9079

Website
vccahouston.org

Helpful Information

Garbage & Yard Trimmings: Mondays

Recycling: Mondays Jun 1, Jun 14, Jun 28, Jul 12, Jul 26, Aug 9, Aug 23, Sep 6, Sep 20.

Heavy Trash Collection:

Tree Waste: 1st Tuesday in July, Sep, & Nov

Junk Waste: 1st Tuesday in Jun, Aug, Oct & Dec

Officer Pate: HPD representative for our area. E-mail him with your concerns at wpate43@yahoo.com.

City of Houston: 311 for city services such as requesting a recycling bin, reporting graffiti, or derelict building issues.

Helpful Phone and E-mail Numbers

Our New Website: vccahouston.org

City Council Member Dist D:

Wanda Adams: (832) 393-3001

e-mail: districtd@cityofhouston.net

City Council Member at Large, Pos.1 Stephen Costello

e-mail: atlarge1@cityofhouston.net

**Go to vccahouston.org for more helpful info,
phone numbers & links to city services.**



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